



Recorder eNewsletter

for the botanical recording community

April 2024

BSBI Irish Spring Conference

Bookings are now open for the [BSBI Irish Spring Conference](#), which takes place at the National Botanic Gardens, Glasnevin on Saturday 20th April. This event is always popular - it's a great way to learn more about Irish botany and meet up with like-minded people - but places are limited, so if you plan to attend, please [book in advance](#). Tickets are free of charge, but a donation towards costs and refreshments would be much appreciated.

On the subject of conferences, CIEEM's annual [Irish Conference](#) will be held at Croke Park, Dublin on 17th April (theme: 'Examining the Practical Impacts of Environmental Policy and Legislation on Ireland's Ecology'), which BSBI members might also be interested in attending.

[Bridget Keehan](#), BSBI Ireland Officer

Native plant collectors and growers for FISCs

BSBI is keen to hear from anyone who may be interested in contributing to increasing our capacity to run [FISCs](#) across the UK, by becoming an official plant collector or native plant grower for FISCs.

A major bottleneck in delivery of FISCs is the provision of enough interesting plant specimens from around the country to meet the strict requirements for the FISC lab tests. The lab tests require a selection of plant species from around the whole country and from a variety of different habitats.

Would you be willing to spend one morning a year collecting geographically distinct plants from your region to post to a FISC Assessor for use in a FISC test?

Do you already grow a number of interesting or rare native plants, parts of which you may be willing to share for use in a FISC test?

If you are interested in getting involved, please get in touch with me at fisc@bsbi.org.

[Chantal Helm](#), BSBI Training Coordinator: FISC and Identiplant

Wild plants on the (Scottish) Tourist Trail

The Committee for Scotland has been discussing creating a series of online 'leaflets' providing information about plants that can be seen in the wild at [sites visited by tourists](#). These will be aimed at the general public, hence people with limited botanical skills, with the objective of encouraging visitors to tourist sites to notice some of the wild plants around them. We have developed a [pro forma](#) which we would like BSBI members to consider completing for a tourist site they visit over the summer.

In the fullness of time there are several ways of promoting such 'leaflets', including an online map of our own and asking site owners to link them to their own web pages. However, what we need next is to create a portfolio of examples to get things rolling.

If you are able to give this a try, we would very much welcome receiving one (or more!) completed [forms](#) from you.

[David Elston](#), Chair, Committee for Scotland

Revision of Guidance documents for Field Meetings and Fieldwork

Each year we review our documentation on field meetings and fieldwork. This annual review has now been completed and updated documents on [Safety in the field](#) (mostly aimed at field workers, but relevant to all recorders), [Guidance for participants at field meetings](#) and [Guidance on leading and organising meetings](#) are now available on the [Field Meetings and Indoor Events webpage](#).

Some quick points: Participants from the UK at meetings outside the UK are recommended to carry a UK Global Health Insurance Card. Safety in the field has some updated advice on Weil's Disease and Lyme Disease and is updated to better cover the Republic of Ireland. The Guidance on leading etc. has mostly had minor tidying to cover changed practices.

[Jonathan Shanklin](#), Hon. Field Meetings Secretary

Note for Irish Recorders: Recording Invasive Species in 2024

As you know, the Ireland Officer post receives funding from NPWS, and in return, we provide support to them on various botanical projects. Currently, this includes finding out more about the distribution of invasive plant species in Ireland - specifically, those species listed as [Invasive Alien Species of Union Concern](#). Therefore, this year, we are requesting

that recorders, where they come across these species, please provide full record details (including, if possible, 10-figure grid references and notes on population size) when adding them to the DDb. This would be greatly appreciated.

[Bridget Keehan](#), BSBI Ireland Officer

NPWS Grants for Small Recording Projects in Ireland 2024

In Ireland, the National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) recently launched their 2024 grant scheme for small biological recording projects, so if you have an interesting study in mind for this year, check out the NPWS '[News](#)' page - or the BSBI [Grants](#) page - for more information. (But do it soon, as bookings close on 8th April!) BSBI members and recorders have contributed some fantastic studies in the past under this scheme, and NPWS would be delighted to receive more botanical applications this year.

[Bridget Keehan](#), BSBI Ireland Officer

New ID guide: *Woodrushes of Britain and Ireland* by Tim Rich

I have produced an identification guide to the eleven woodrushes (*Luzula*, Juncaceae) and hybrids found in Britain and Ireland. The guide has an introduction, explanation of the characters and keys, followed by species accounts each including descriptions, taxonomic notes, distributions (with a map) and habitats, and finally a short glossary, references and index. It has 74 pages with numerous colour pictures and line drawings.

Printed copies are A5 in size, softback and perfect bound and cost £12.95 inclusive of P&P in the UK (£14.95 P&P to Europe). Please contact me via email first with your address as there are limited hard copies available: tim_rich@sky.com

[Digital Kindle edition £7.00](#). The Kindle app for smartphones and PCs is free to download and use - you do not need a dedicated Kindle reader.

[Tim Rich](#)

The Vegetative Key is back!

The second edition of John Poland & Eric Clement's Vegetative Key to the British Flora has been reprinted - it had been out of print for some time. The reprint incorporates corrections

made since the first printing in 2020, and is now available from Summerfield Books and other natural history book-sellers.

[Louise Marsh](#), BSBI Comms Officer

***Festuca filiformis* – Fine-leaved Sheep's-fescue**

As with most Fescues, the Fine-leaved Sheep's-fescue (*F. filiformis*) is probably under-recorded. Where it is recorded, it seems like a single record or few records in the same area. Some of these areas are likely to be larger than a monad or even tetrad. Thus, it might be more frequent than the records suggest. Please collect this, and any other small Fescue during the season (flowering or fruiting) and send later all together for checking.

Depending on condition etc., some may not be possible to identify. The different ploidies in *F. ovina* (Sheep's Fescue) mainly need a chromosome count to be sure of the taxon. The diploid *F. ovina* subsp. *ovina* may be more frequent in Scotland (pers. comm. C. Stace). Therefore, I would welcome material (preferably live) to look at in more detail from there. Others done on morphology alone cannot reliably be identified to subspecies (especially the diploid), but the two tetraploids are larger so it may be possible to present a case for those. Further studies are required for both the *F. ovina* and *F. rubra* subspecies and as the aggregates as a whole.

[Michael Wilcox](#) – see [BSBI Yearbook](#) for postal address

County Membership Lists

If, as a BSBI volunteer such as a County Recorder, you need access to members' contact details in your area, we can arrange this. We will need you to read and sign our Volunteer Confidentiality and Data Protection Agreement. For more information see the [membership list](#) page.

[James Harding-Morris](#), BSBI Countries Manager

Recorder eNewsletter

Recorder eNewsletter is aimed at all BSBI recorders, referees, members and supporters involved with recording. If you have active recorders in your county that you think would appreciate receiving it then please encourage them to [subscribe to it here](#).

I'd welcome short contributions from anyone on topics of interest to fellow readers. Recorder eNewsletter is generally published at the beginning of each month so contributions should reach me at the beginning of the preceding week. I'd also be pleased to have feedback.

[James Harding-Morris](#), BSBI Countries Manager